

Branch Secretary's Report for the 2019-2020, 2020-21 Seasons

In the 2019-2020 season the Branch had 44 members, up six from the previous season.

The first meeting of the season took place on 23 September 2019 in the auditorium of the Life Church, West Richmond Street, due to redevelopment works being carried out at the Charteris Centre. Eileen Holttum kindly agreed to rehouse the branch's library for safekeeping in her house while the redevelopment work is going on.

Our regular conductors were Anne Martin, Peter Wraith and Margaret McLay.

On the 30 September 2019, the annual EGM was held to approve the branch accounts.

Members from the branch attended the Glasgow Branch Playing Day, with guest conductor Pamela Flanagan, on Saturday 2 November 2019.

Our Christmas Evening was on Monday 16 December 2019, when we played to an audience of family and friends. The conductors from the Branch were Anne Martin and Peter Wraith, and we were joined by members of the Edinburgh Adult Education Evening Class conducted by Marg Hall. The collection was sent to Mercy Ships.

On 17 February the branch held its AGM.

The branch's annual playing day took place on Saturday 22 February 2020 at St Columba's by the Castle, Johnston Terrace when guest conductor was former Musical Director of the Edinburgh Branch, composer and conductor Michael Graham. The programme included his own composition, a Bristolian Rhapsody and his arrangement of Within a Furlong of Edinburgh Town. Thirty-seven players took part and we welcomed visitors from other SRP branches, the Scottish Recorder Orchestra, and the Edinburgh Adult Education Evening Class.

On 4 March 2020 twenty players from the Edinburgh Branch, conducted by Joint Musical Director Anne Martin, enjoyed success in the Wind Ensembles Open Class of the Edinburgh Competition Festival where we played two contrasting dances: William Byrd's Pavan à 6 and Lyndon Hilling's Fox Trot. Our performance was rated "excellent" by adjudicator Ian Wilson who praised our "excellent blended tone". We were delighted that Ian took the opportunity to ask how many in the audience had ever before seen or heard a large recorder group with such a range of instruments. The large enthusiastic audience included a number of young people, many of whom had never previously heard a large recorder ensemble, so hopefully we will have made a few converts to the sound of recorders playing together.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person meetings of the branch were suspended on 23 March 2020 and ever since branch meetings have taken place by Zoom, when members have given talks on recorder related topics which interest them, followed by discussions and chat. These included a very successful Zoom recital given by Emma Murphy on Monday 16 November. The branch has paid for a Zoom subscription to allow meetings to last for more than 40 minutes, and we are very grateful to Anne and Alan Martin for hosting these meetings. We have also ventured into the world of virtual performance and held a very successful Virtual Christmas Concert on 14 December 2020. Those attending the concert were invited to contribute to Help Musicians. Some of our virtual performances can be heard on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SRPEdinburgh> For our next virtual performance, of Anne Martin's arrangement of three short Schubert pieces, we have invited members to make a video of themselves playing so that we will be able to both hear and see the performance. We are very grateful to Alan Martin and Tom Pitcairn for mastering the software to put these performances together.

Anne Martin was the Edinburgh Branch delegate at the National Conference which

was held by Zoom on Sunday 16 August 2020. Bea Frances was an observer. The full minutes, reports and accounts of the Conference can be found at <http://www.srp.org.uk/annual-conference/>

We are grateful to all our conductors for their hard work, patience and good humour especially during these difficult times.

Eileen Finlayson
February 2021

Weekly Monday evening meeting continued by Zoom for the remainder of the 2020-2021 season and included an SRP workshop on Playing by Ear with Annabel Knight on 26 April, a Zoom concert given by Andrew Collis on 17 May and a Zoom talk by Ian Johnston entitled "Dr Megaphone's Nodes and Antinodes: an informal exploration of the acoustics of woodwind instruments" on 24 May. Our Virtual Summer Evening was by Zoom on 14 June when those attending were invited to contribute to Help Musicians and the Stroke Association.